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母考室の名称 可変抵抗スイツチ

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明細響

1. 考案の名称

可変抵抗スイッチ

2. 実用新窓登録請求の範囲

ケース庭部に設けられた二対の電極と、ケース内でそのうちの一対の電極上に載置された平板状感圧導電性ゴムと、この感圧導電性ゴム上面に接触しないように一端がケースに、他端が残りの一対の電極のうちの一方の端部に支持され、押圧により曲率中心を通る砂線方向が直角方向に変化する弾性導電曲面板と、この曲面板に下端が当接あるいは近接し、上端が前記ケースから露出する押しボタンとからなる可変抵抗スイッチ。

3. 考案の詳細な説明

(産業上の利用分野)

本考案はスイッチのオン、オフ機能の切換動作を指先の押圧感覚で容易に判断することができると共に、スイッチの押しボタンの押し具合で2つの蝎子間の抵抗値を変化させることがで

(1)

きる可変抵抗スイッチに関する。

〔従来の技術〕

従来の窓圧素子、特に窓圧導電性ゴムを使用した可変抵抗スイッチは、スイッチケースの底部に一対の電極が敷設され、その上に載記され、た窓圧導電性ゴムの上面を押しボタンで押圧することによる窓圧導電性ゴムの抵抗値の変化を利用するのが一般的である。

ところが、このような可変抵抗スイッチについては、オフ状態で押しボタンを押した時に、オフ状態から可変抵抗機能を働かせるまでの動作中に、いつオン状態となったかの切換節度(クリックアクション)がなく、押しボタンの操作者にとってこのスイッチが使いづらいものとなることが多かった。

(考案の目的)

本考案の目的は前記従来の可変抵抗スイッチの有する欠点を解消し、押圧操作時にオフ状態からオン状態に切り換わったことが操作者に明確に判断できるように、押しボタンのストロー

クの途中に切換点(クリックポイント)を持たせ、さらに押しボタンを押し続けると 2 つの端イ間の抵抗値を変化させることができる優れた可変抵抗スイッチを提供することである。

(考案の構成)

(実施例)

以下添付図面を用いて本考案の実施例を説明 する。

第1関~第4関はそれぞれ本考案の可変抵抗

スイッチ10の一実施例の構造を示す平断而図、 底面図、互いに直交する方向の緩断面図である。

これらの電極のうち、一対の電極5A、5Bの上には、これら両電荷5A、5Bに跨るように均一厚の平板状感圧導電性ゴム6が裁置されており、この感圧導電性ゴム6の上部にはこれを限うようにブリッジ電極7が設けられている。このは一次のでは、導電層7Aと絶縁層7Bとから構成されており、前記感圧導電性ゴム6側が導電層7Aとなっているが、前記感圧導電性ゴム6側が導電層7Aとなっているが、前記感圧導電性ゴム6は加圧されない限り導電性を示さず、圧力に応じ

て抵抗値が変化するので、無負荷状態では前記 強極5A、5Bは絶縁状態に保持されている。

そして、前記ブリッジ電極1の上方には弾性 導電曲面板3が、その一端をケース内の段部2C に支持され、他端が前記…対の電極4A、4Bのう ちの一方の電極、例えば電極4Aに支持され、プ リッジ電極7に非接触状態で位置している。こ の弾性導電曲面板3は、第5図に示すようにそ の長手方向海端部が上方に湾曲して凹面が上を 向いた形状をしており、その曲率巾心を通る母 粮8の…端が前述のように下部スイッチケース 2Bの側面に形成された段部2Cに載置状態で支持 され、他端が電極和に支持されている。前記能 極4Aに対になる段部2C側の電極4Bは、前記段部 20よりも低く形成されており、さらに前記プリ ッジ電極1の上面はこの電極48よりも低い位置 にある。このために、前記弾性導電曲面板3は 電極48およびブリッジ電極7に非接触の状態に あるのである。

前記弾性導電曲面板3は、例えばばね性を有

する80 μ 程度のリン青銅で形成されており、凹面側から矢印 F で示す力で母線 8 の中心を押圧した場合、この凹面は弾性変形を起こし、クリックアクションで前記凹面の向きが変化し、母線 8 の方向は第 6 関に母線 9 で示すように直角方向に変化する。

この時、前記弾性導電曲面板3の底面3Mが前記電極4Bに接触するように、電極4Bと下部スイッチケース2Bの段部2Cとの距離が調整されている。そして、さらに押圧されると弾性導電曲面板3は下方に湾曲し、前記プリッジ電極7に接触しながらこれを押圧することになる。

また、この実施例では弾性導電曲面板3は長手方向両端部が上方に湾曲しているが、ド方に 湾曲していてもこのクリックアクションは得られる。

このような弾性導電曲面板3の上方には、前記押しボタン1の下端が当接あるいは近投した 状態で位置している。この押しボタン1は、その期部18が前記上部スイッチケース24に形成さ

れた貫通孔20内に上下に掲動自在に挿入されており、上端の拡開された関部1Aが貫通孔20の上部に踏出している。

さらに押しボタン1の押圧を続けると、第8 図に示すように弾性導電山面板3は下方に湾曲 し、ブリッジ電極7がこの弾性導電曲面板3を 介して押しボタン1に押圧され、その下方に位 置する感圧導電性ゴム 6 も押圧される。すると、この感圧導電性ゴム 6 の厚さ方向の抵抗納が減少し、この方向に電波が流れ易くなる。この状態が本考案の可変抵抗スイッチ10の可変抵抗動作開始点であり、電波が一方の端子5Cから電圧導電性ゴム 6 を介してブリッジ電極 7 の導電層 7 Aを選り、 逆に感圧導電性ゴム 6 を介して低方の端子5Dへと流れることができるようになる。

さらに押しボタン1を押圧すると、窓圧導電性ゴム6が圧縮されてその抵抗値が減るので、端子50間の抵抗値は徐々に減少する。また、途中で押しボタン1の押圧力を緩めると、窓圧導電性ゴム6は弾性力で元の状態に戻ろうとするので、その抵抗値は増大する。

そして、前述の押圧動作をやめると、まず、 感圧導電性ゴム 6 が弾性力で無負荷の状態まで 復帰し、その厚さ方向の抵抗値が無限大となっ て端子50 一端子50間の導通がなくなり、次に、 弾性導電曲面板 3 の復元力によって押しボクン 1 が押し上げられ、弾性導電曲面板 3 は無負荷

時の状態の位置に戻って電極4Bには接触しなくなるので、端子4C-端子4D間が非導通状態となる。

本考案の可変抵抗スイッチ10は以上のように 動作するので、弾性導電曲面板 3 の形状変化に よるスイッチの端子4C - 端子4D間の導通(オン) 動作が押圧感覚で容易に押しボタン1を押すを 作者に理解でき、さらに押しボタンを押すを し続ければ、過子5C - 端子5D間の抵抗値の変化 を制御することが可能である。さらにまた ン、オフ動作を行う端子と抵抗値が変化する場 子とが一対すつあるので、両者を別々の用途に 使用することも可能である。

なお、オン、オフ端子4C、40に流す電流と、可変抵抗端子5C、5Dに流す電流とを分ける必要がない場合は、第9図に示すように前記ブリッジ電桶7と、可変抵抗端子5C、5Dのうちの一方は必要がなくなる。

このように、可変抵抗器にスイッチ機能を付 加することによって、例えば可変抵抗器用のア ンプへの電源を必要時以外カットしたり、モータのスピードコントロールを行う場合でレギュレータ回路を短路する必要がある場合に、押圧するとまずスイッチが入ってレギュレータ回路を短路し、次に抵抗値が変化するというような機能を1つのスイッチで実現することができるので、本考案の可変抵抗スイッチの用途は非常に広い。

(考案の効果)

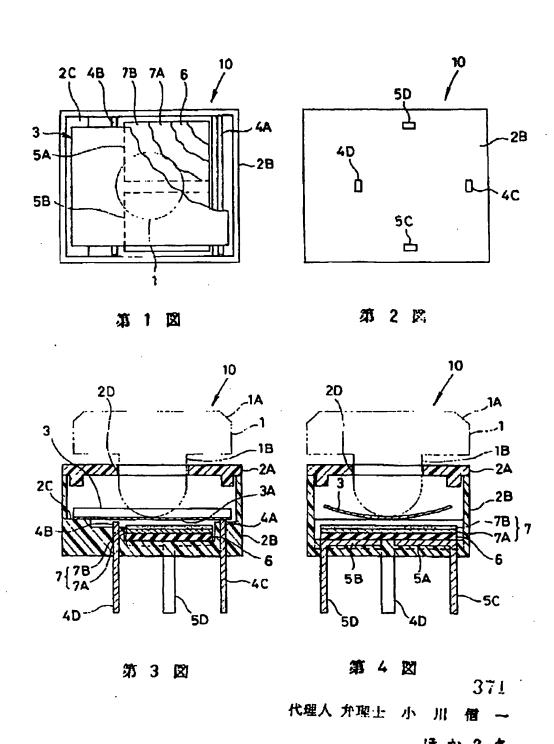
以上説明したように本考案の可変抵抗スイッチは、ケース底部に設けられた二対の電極と、ケース内でそのうちの一対の電極上に報復性である。 た平板状態圧導出性である。この感圧導電性である。 は、ケースにはないように一端がケースには理解性である。 は、ケースにはないように一端がケースには他端が外の一対の電極のうちの一方の端部にはないがある。 は、押圧により曲率中心を通る母線方向の である。 が変化する弾性導電曲面板と、この曲面板に下端が当接あるいは近接し、上端が高いは近接し、上端が高いなっていることにより、押圧操作時にオフ状態から

オン状態に切り換わったことが操作者に明確に 判断でき、さらに押しボタンを押し続けると 2 つの端子間の抵抗値を変化させることができる というオン、オフスイッチの機能と可変抵抗の 概能とを 1 つのスイッチで実現できるという例 れた効果があり、その応用範囲が広いという利 点がある。

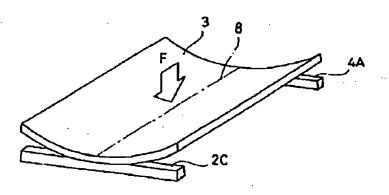
4. 図面の簡単な説明

第1図~第4図は本考案の可変抵抗スイッチの一実施例の構造を示すもので、第1図は平断面図、第2図は展面図、第3図は緩断面図、第4図は第3図のNーN線における緩断面図、第5図は本考案の可変抵抗スイッチに使用する質性専電曲面板の押圧による変形状態を示す解析図の押圧による変形状態を示す解析図、第7図は本考案の可変抵抗スイッチを軽く押圧した状態を示す緩断面図、第9図は本考案の可変抵抗スイッチの他の実施例の構成を示す緩断面図である。

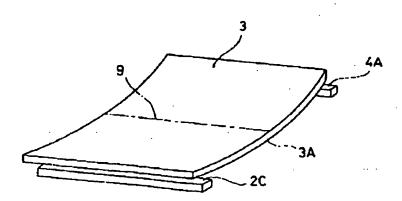
1 …押しボタン、2A…上部スイッチケース、2B…下部スイッチケース、2C…段部、3 …弾性 導鐵曲面板、4A.4B,5A.5B … 截板、4C.4D,5C.5B …端子、6 …感圧導管性ゴム、7 …ブリッジ電極、7A…導電層、7B… 絶縁層、8,9 …母線、10…本考案の可変抵抗スイッチ。



第 5 図



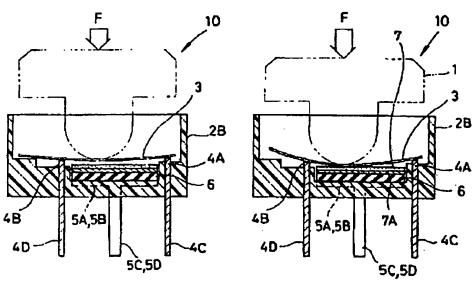
第 6 図



372

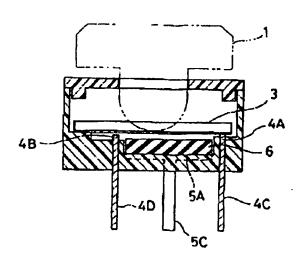
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第 7 図

第 8 図



第 9 図

373

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(54) Title of the invention Variable resistance switch

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Specification

Title of the invention
 Variable resistance switch

2. Utility Model Registration Claims

A variable resistance switch comprising two pairs of electrodes provided at the bottom of a case, a flat plate of pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber provided on one of said pairs of electrodes within said case, an elastic electro-conductive curved plate supported by said case at one end and by the end of one of the other pair of electrodes at the other end so that it is not in contact with the top surface of said pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber and of which the generation line direction passing through the center of curvature is changed orthogonally in response to pressure, and a push button having a bottom end abutting or residing near said curved plate and a top end exposed from said case.

Detailed explanation of the invention [Scope of the invention]

The present invention relates to a variable resistance switch of which the on/off switching can be easily recognized through the feeling of pressure on a fingertip and the resistance between two terminals can be changed depending on how much the push button of the switch is pressed.

[Prior art technology]

Prior art pressure-sensitive elements, particularly variable resistance switches using pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber comprise a pair of electrodes at the bottom of a switch case and a pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber on top of it wherein the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber is pressured at the top surface through a push button to change the resistance of the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber.

In such a variable resistance switch, when the push button is pressed while the switch is off, there is no switchover point (click action) to indicate when it is turned on in the course of operation to activate the variable resistance function from the off-state. The operator of the push button often experiences difficulty in using such a switch.

[Purpose of the invention]

The purpose of the present invention is to resolve the above problems with the prior art variable resistance switch and to provide an excellent variable resistance switch in which a switchover point (click point) is provided in the middle of the stroke of the push button so that the operator clearly recognizes switching from the off-state to the on-state in the course of the pressing operation,

and the resistance between two terminals is changed when the push button is further pressed.

[Structure of the invention]

In order to achieve the above purpose, the variable resistance switch of the present invention is characterized by comprising two pairs of electrodes provided at the bottom of a case, a flat plate of pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber provided on one of the pairs of electrodes within the case, an elastic electro-conductive curved plate supported by the case at one end and by the end of one of the other pair of electrodes at the other end so that it is not in contact with the top surface of the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber and of which the generation line direction passing through the center of curvature is orthogonally changed in response to pressure, and a push button having a bottom end abutting or residing near the curved plate and a top end exposed from the case.

[Embodiments]

Embodiments of the present invention are described hereafter with reference to the drawings.

Figs. 1 to 4 are a plane cross-sectional view, a bottom view, and cross-sectional views in directions orthogonal to each other, respectively, showing the structure of a variable resistance switch 10 according to an embodiment of the present invention.

The variable resistance switch 10 of this embodiment comprises a lower switch case 2B, an upper switch case 2A covering it, and a push button 1 exposed above the upper switch case 2A. Two pairs of electrodes 4A, 4B, 5A, and 5B are provided at the bottom of the lower switch case 2B at specific distances. The ends of the electrodes A, 4B, 5A, and 5B protrude from the bottom of the lower switch case 2B as terminals 4C, 4D, 5C, and 5D.

Among these electrodes, on a pair of electrodes 5A, 5B provided is a flat plate of pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 having a uniform thickness to link the electrodes 5A and 5B together. A bridge electrode 7 is provided on the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 to cover it. The bridge electrode 7 consists of an electro-conductive layer 7A and an insulating layer 7B. The electro-conductive layer 7A is on the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 side. The pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 is not electro-conductive unless it is pressured.

It has a variable resistance depending on the pressure. Therefore, the electrodes 5A and 5B are insulated from each other under no load.

An elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 is provided above the bridge electrode 7. The elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 is supported by a step 2C within the case at one end and by one of the pair of electrodes 4A, 4B, for example, the electrode 4A, at the other end so that it is not in contact with the bridge electrode 7. As shown in Fig.5, with the longitudinal ends being curved upward, the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 has a concave surface facing upward, supported by the step 2C formed on a sidewall of the lower switch case 2B at one end of the generating line 8 passing through the center of curvature resting thereon and by the electrode 4A at the other end. The electrode 4B, which is closer to the step 2C and pairs with the electrode 4A, is at a lower level than electrode 4B. Therefore, the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 is not in contact with the electrode 4B and bridge electrode 7.

The elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 is, for example, made of a phosphor bronze of approximately $80~\mu$ having spring-like properties. When pressed at the center of the generating line 8 on the concave surface side with a force indicated by an arrow F, the concave surface is elastically deformed and changes its orientation in the click action. The generating line 8 changes its orientation orthogonally to a generating line 9 shown in Fig.6.

The distance between the electrode 4B and the step 2C of the lower switch case 2B is adjusted so that, in the above process, the bottom surface 3A of the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 makes contact with the electrode 4B. Further pressed, the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 is curved downward and makes contact with and pushes down the bridge electrode 7.

In this embodiment, the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 has the longitudinal ends curved upward. However, the longitudinal ends curved downward yield the same click action.

A push button 1 is provided above the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 with the bottom end abutting or residing near it.

The push button 1 has a body 1B that is vertically slidably inserted in a through-hole 2D formed in the upper switch case 2A and a head 1A having an extended top and exposed above the through-hole 2D.

For operating the variable resistance switch 10 of the present invention having the above structure, the push button 1 is pressed down so that its bottom end presses the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 downward. With this pressing, the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 changes its state from the one in which the longitudinal ends are curved upward to the other in which the transverse ends are curved upward via a flat state. This is a click action. When the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 undergoes the click action described above, it makes contact with the electrode 4B below it and establishes a conductive path between the terminals 4C and 4D, as shown in Fig.7. In this state, the variable resistance switch 10 of the present invention is at the switch-on point.

With the push button 1 being further pressed, the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 is curved downward as shown in Fig.8. Then, the bridge electrode 7 is pressed by the push button 1 via the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 and, subsequently, the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 below the bridge electrode 7 is pressed.

Then, the resistance through the thickness of the pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 is reduced, which allows the electric current to easily flow. In this state, the variable resistance switch 10 of the present invention is at the variable resistance operation start point where the electric current flows from one terminal 5C to the electro-conductive layer 7A of the bridge electrode 7 via the pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 and further to the other terminal 5D via the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6.

With the push button 1 being further pressed, the pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 is compressed and has reduced resistance, gradually reducing the resistance between the terminals 5C and 5D. On the other hand, with the pressure on the push button 1 being released, the pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 tends to return to its original state due to elasticity and the resistance is increased.

When the pressing is discontinued, first, the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber 6 returns to its no-load state due to elasticity; then, the resistance through the thickness reaches an infinite value, nujllifying the conductivity between the terminals 5C and 5D. Then, the restoration of the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 pushes up the push button 1 and the elastic electro-conductive curved plate 3 returns to its no-load state so that it is no longer in contact with the electrode 4B, nullifying the conductivity between the terminals 4C and 4D.

The variable resistance switch 10 of the present invention operates as described above. The operator pressing the push button 1 can easily recognize the establishment of conductivity (ON) through the feeling of pressure between the terminals 4C and 4D of the switch as a result of the change in shape of the elastic electro-conductive curved pate 3. By further pressing the push button, he/she can control the change in resistance between the terminals 5C and 5D. Furthermore, two separate pairs of terminals, used for different purposes, are provided for the on/off operation and for the resistance change.

When the electric current through the on/off terminals 4C and 4D and the electric current through the variable resistance terminals 5C and 5D are not separated, either the bridge electrode 7 or the variable resistance terminals 5C, 5D are unnecessary.

As described above, by adding a switch function to a variable resistor, a single switch can be used, for example, to disconnect the power to an amplifier for a variable resistor when it is not in use or to first turn on a switch to short-circuit a regulator circuit and then change the resistance in controlling the motor speed when the regulator circuit should be short-circuited. The variable resistance switch of the present invention has extensive applications.

[Effects of the invention]

As described above, the variable resistance switch of the present invention comprises two pairs of electrodes provided at the bottom of a case, a flat plate of pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber provided on one of the pairs of electrodes within the case, an elastic electro-conductive curved plate supported by the case at one end and by the end of one of the other pair of electrodes at the other end so that it is not in contact with the top surface of the pressure-sensitive electro-conductive rubber and of which the generation line direction passing through the center of curvature is changed orthogonally in response to pressure, and a push button having a bottom end abutting or residing near the curved plate and a top end exposed from the case.

The operator can clearly recognize switching from the off-state to the on-state in the course of the pressing operation. With the push button being further pressed, the resistance between the two terminals is changed. In this way, the present invention has the efficacy that the on-off switching function and the variable resistance function are realized in a single switch and advantageously has extensive application.

4. Brief explanation of the drawings

Figs. 1 to 4 show the structure of an embodiment of the variable resistance switch of the present invention: Fig.1 is a plane cross-sectional view; Fig.2, a bottom view; Fig.3, a vertical cross-sectional view; and Fig.4, a vertical cross-sectional view at the line IV-IV in Fig.3. Fig.5 is a perspective view of the elastic electro-conductive curved plate used in the variable resistance switch of the present invention. Fig.6 is a perspective view of the elastic electro-conductive curved plate when it is deformed by pressing. Fig.7 is a vertical cross-sectional view of the variable resistance switch of the present invention when it is gently pressed. Fig.8 is a vertical cross-sectional view of the variable resistance switch of the present invention when it is further pressed. Fig.9 is a vertical cross-sectional view showing the structure of another embodiment of the variable resistance switch of the present invention.

1 ... push button, 2A ... upper switch case, 2B ... lower switch case, 2C ... step, 3 ... elastic electro-conductive curved plate, 4A, 4B, 5A, 5B ... electrode, 4C, 4D, 5C, 5D ... terminal, 6 ... pressure sensitive electro-conductive rubber, 7 bridge electrode, 7A ... electro-conductive layer, 7B ... insulating layer, 8, 9 ... generating line, 10 ... variable resistance switch of the present invention.

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Fig.1 Fig.2

Fig.3 Fig.4

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Fig.5

Fig.6

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Fig.7 Fig.8

Fig.9

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSLATION

I Roger P. Lewis, whose address is 42 Bird Street North, Martinsburg WV 25405, declare and state the following:

I am well acquainted with the English and Japanese languages and have in the past translated numerous English/Japanese documents of legal and/or technical content.

I hereby certify that the Japanese translation of the attached translation of documents identified as:

Laid Open Utility Model

S61-103836
"Variable Resistance Switch"

is to the best of my knowledge and ability true and accurate.

I further declare that all statements contained herein of our own knowledge, are true, that all statements of information and belief are believed to be true.

ROGER P. LEWIS

October 24, 2006

Exhibit 3 to the Request for Inter Partes Re-examination of

In re Patent No: 6,347,997

Issued: February 19, 2002

Applicant: Brad A. Armstrong

Title: Analog Controls Housed with Electronic Displays